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BOROUGH OF SOUTH MOLTON



Annual Report

of the

Medical Officer of Health
and Chief Sanitary Inspector

for the

Year ended December 31st, 1951.



113, East Street,

South Molton,

June, 1952.

*To His Worship the Mayor, Aldermen and
Councillors of the Borough of South Molton.*

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

*I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the
Health and Sanitation Administration of the Borough for the
year 1951.*

Your obedient Servant,

F. J. H. MARTIN,

M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond),. D.P.H. (Oxon).

Medical Officer of Health.

South Molton Borough.

LIST OF STAFF.

The Staff of the Public Health Department consists of:—

Part-time Officers:—

F. J. H. MARTIN

M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.H (Oxon.).

Medical Officer of Health.

Mrs. ELWORTHY, Clerk.

A. J. C. NEX, C.R.S.I.

Additional Sanitary Inspector.

Whole-time Officer:—

H. SETTLE, M.S.I.A., C.R.S.I.

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area in acres	...	...	...	...	...	5,910
Population	...	...	...	...	...	3,115
Number of Inhabited Houses	...	...	...	...	...	1,006
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	...	£16,746
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	...	...	£62

Vital Statistics.

	Males	Females	Total
LIVE BIRTHS—Legitimate	22	27	49
Illegitimate	3	1	4
			53

Rate per 1,000 population 17.0

	Males	Females	Total
STILL BIRTHS—Legitimate	0	0	0
Illegitimate	0	0	0
			0

Rate per 1,000 total Live and Still Births 0

	Males	Females	Total
DEATHS	35	16	51

Death rate per 1,000 population 16.3

Deaths from Puerperal Causes.

Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	...	...	...	0
Other Pueperal Causes	...	...	...	...	...	0

Below I append a Table showing the comparative figures for South Molton Borough and England and Wales.

The local Birth Rate and the local Death Rate are shown corrected by the area comparability factors.

Rate per 1,000 population			Death Rate per 1,000	Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births	
	Live Births	Still Births		Deaths under 1 year	Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years
South Molton Borough	20.0	.0	11.7	56.6	18.8
England and Wales	15.5	.36	12.5	29.6	1.4

Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

				Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	...	...	...	2	1	3
Illegitimate	..	...	...	0	0	0
						<hr/> 3 <hr/>

Rate per 1,000 Live Births 56.6

Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea under 2 years of age	...	...	...	...	1

Causes of Death during the year 1951.

						Males	Females
Respiratory Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Malignant Neoplasm Stomach	...	...	...	...	...	2	2
Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms	...	...	...	...	...	5	1
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	...	...	...	...	...	4	5
Coronary Disease and Angina	...	...	...	...	...	3	0
Hypertension with Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	...	1	0
Other Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	...	7	4
Influenza	...	...	...	...	...	0	1
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	2	0
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	2	0
Acute Gastro Enteritis	...	...	...	...	...	1	0
Congenital Malformation	...	...	...	...	...	0	1
Other defined and ill defined Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	5	1
Accidents	...	...	...	...	...	2	0
						<hr/> 35 <hr/>	<hr/> 16 <hr/>

Tuberculosis.

There was one case of Pulmonary Tuberculosis notified in 1951—a male, aged 63.

Acute Polio Myelitis.

No cases occurred during the year.

Cases of Infectious Diseases notified in 1951.

This table shows the cases notified in their age group.

AGE		MEASLES		WHOOPING COUGH	
Years		M	F	M	F
3-4	...	—	1	1	—
4-5	...	2	—	—	—
5-10	...	2	1	—	1
20-25	...	1	—	—	—
35-40	...	1	—	—	—
TOTALS		6	2	1	1

General Provisions of Health Services in the Area

HOSPITALS.

1. TUBERCULOSIS.

Hawley Sanatorium situated in the Borough of Barnstaple has 29 beds.

2. MATERNITY CASES.

The Devon County Council are continuing to act as they did in 1949 as agents of the Regional Hospital Board until the Board has completed its own plans for the treatment of Maternity cases.

The South Molton and District Cottage Hospital continues to function under the North Devon Hospital Group, and deals with a certain number of Maternity cases.

There is also a ward of 15 beds with a fully qualified staff at the North Devon Infirmary, Barnstaple, available for Maternity cases of doubt and difficulty.

A General Practitioners' Maternity Unit of 13 beds was opened at "Highfield," Victoria Road, Barnstaple, on March 1st, 1952.

3. ISOLATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Cases are sent either to Whipton Hospital, near Exeter, or to the Bideford Isolation Hospital, which is situated just outside the Borough of Bideford. It is of recent construction, and well equipped in every way for the treatment of Infectious Diseases. It comprises 34 beds (6 of which are in observation cubicles) and 4 cots.

4. SMALL POX.

The Small Pox Hospital to which cases of Small Pox will be sent is at Upton Pine. Telephone to Isolation Hospital, Whipton, Exeter, 67158, and this is the same number for the ambulance.

5. GENERAL.

The South Molton and District Cottage Hospital, situated in the Borough serves this area. There are 10 beds for General and Maternity cases. The North Devon Infirmary situated in Barnstaple also serves the area and provides modern medical and surgical treatment.

In South Molton there are 29 beds available at Beech House for the Chronic Sick.

A Blood Bank has been established at the North Devon Infirmary.

6. CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

V.D. Clinic.—This is held at the Annex of the North Devon Infirmary, Barnstaple.

SESSIONS.

<i>Females.</i> —Monday, 4 p.m.	Thursday, 4.30 p.m.
<i>Males.</i> —Monday, 5.15 p.m.	Thursday, 5.45 p.m.

CHEST CLINIC held at the North Devon Infirmary.

Tuesday	9. 0 a.m. - 1. 0 p.m.	} Clinic and X-Ray Examinations
	2. 0 p.m. - 4. 0 p.m.	
Thursday	9. 0 a.m. - 1. 0 p.m.	}
	2. 0 p.m. - 4.30 p.m.	
Friday	9. 0 a.m. - 1. 0 p.m.	} A.P. refills
	2. 0 p.m. - 4. 0 p.m.	

7. LABORATORY FACILITIES.

The main Laboratory is situated at 7, Dix's Field, Exeter, and Dr. Moore is the Director. It is completely installed with the necessary equipment for bacteriological examinations of all kinds. Its diagnostic and consultative services are available for all patients. Bacteriological examinations of drinking water and milk are also carried out. The service is extremely valuable and is widely used by the medical practitioners.

The new Pathological Laboratory is now open at the former Barnstaple and North Devon Dispensary building, with a full time Pathologist and Technical Staff to meet the needs of the whole North Devon Area.

8. AMBULANCE SERVICES.

Under Section 27 of the National Health Service Act, 1946, the Local Health Authority (i.e., the Devon County Council) is responsible for the provision of an Ambulance Service and the Devon Health Committee have arranged for this to be provided through the agency of the St. John Ambulance Association. Under the scheme an Ambulance Station has been established at South Molton. The district served is South Molton Borough and

South Molton Rural District. The Hospital Car Service, also under the Devon County Council, is available upon application to the Hospitals and the Ambulance Service is empowered to hire cars in urgent cases when an ambulance is not necessary.

9. IMMUNIZATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA.

Forty-six children received a course of Primary Injections and sixty-five children received a reinforcing injection.

10. VACCINATION.

The table shows the number of children vaccinated in 4 age groups.

Under 1 year—27	1-4 years—3
5-14 years—6	15 years and over—14
Total—50	

11. HOME HELP SCHEME.

This scheme is not being worked in the Borough.

12. PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOMES.

There is one Health Visitor for the Borough and four Nurses.

I desire to thank the Town Clerk, Mr. Settle and Mr. Nex for their valuable help to me.

F. J. H. MARTIN.

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT.

Water Supply.

The supply is obtained from the gathering grounds on the foothills of Exmoor and from the Holywell Spring and is impounded in the Holywell Reservoir which contains approximately 7,000,000 gallons. It is piped therefrom to the Filter House at Westland Bridge and is passed through three Candy Pressure Filters and thence by trunk main of 6 ins. diameter to the Service Reservoirs in North Road, South Molton, the Service Reservoirs being two in number and containing 340,000 gallons, the water is then distributed through the Town mains which are of varying diameters. The water is sampled and analysed at regular intervals. I am pleased to again report that I find that the Filters and the water supply system generally are maintained in a highly efficient manner by your Waterworks Foreman. Chlorination of the water is at present being carried out by the drip feed method at the Service Reservoirs and is proving to be fairly satisfactory, but it is intended to refix the mechanical chlorinator at the Filter House as soon as all the spare parts are to hand, some of which have already arrived. It is considered that when the chlorination is being carried out by mechanical means that rarely will the classification of the water fall below Class 1 of the Ministry's classification for piped supplies. All the new distribution mains are now in operation and it is observed that on account of the new main in North Street that pressures have been improved at the peak heights in North Street and Parsonage Lane.

Results of Sampling and Analyses.

A total of 36 samples of water have been submitted to the Public Health Laboratory at Exeter, and eleven of these were placed in Grade One and the remainder in Grade Two and Three. These figures do not give cause for alarm as the number of samples falling below Grade One are very little below the standard for Grade One, and it is noted that recent samples have shown considerable improvement.

Chemical Analysis of Water.

(Results expressed as parts per 100,000).

Hardness as calcium carbonate—

Temporary, 1.6; Permanent, 2.4. Total:	...	...	4.0
Chlorides as Chlorine	...	...	0.9
Ammonium free and saline, as nitrogen	...	...	0.001
Ammonia, albuminoid, as nitrogen	...	...	0.0038
Nitrates as nitrogen	...	...	0.12
Oxygen (absorbed 3 hours at 37 C.)	...	...	0.024
Nitrites as nitrogen	...	...	nil
Metals, Lead, Copper and Zinc not detected pH Value			6.8

Sewage Disposal.

The new Sewage Disposal Plant at Mole Bridge is in an advanced stage of construction.

A new filter and Distributor has been constructed at the outfall of the sewer at West End Terrace and is working satisfactorily and the effluent has greatly improved.

Sewers.—The sewers in the Borough are generally in good order. A new relief sewer has been laid at Cooks Cross to prevent flooding the adjoining houses during heavy rain storms.

Housing.

Fourteen Traditional Houses were erected and tenanted during the year.

Two private Bungalows have been completed during the year.

Eighty-six Traditional Houses have been erected in the Borough since the end of the War; 12 Houses are in course of erection, and a further 12 Houses are now being tendered for. For a town of the size of South Molton housing progress has been very satisfactory indeed.

Plans.

Twenty-five Plans for new buildings, extensions, etc., have been dealt with under Planning and Byelaws during the year.

Sanitation.

Number of Houses inspected	...	...	10
Number of preliminary notices served under Public Health Acts	...	...	4
Number of Statutory Notices served under Public Health Acts	...	...	2
Chief defects that have been dealt with are:—			
Roof repairs and made watertight.			
Lavatory Pans renewed.			
Choked drains.			
Stoves and cooking appliances renewed.			
General repairs to walls, floors and ceilings.			
Improvement of domestic water supplies.			

Refuse Collection and Disposal.

Domestic refuse is collected regularly in the built-up areas of the Borough, and monthly collections are made from outlying Farms and Hamlets. Refuse is carted to the dump at Hacche Road and the dump is regularly treated for the destruction of Rodents.

Bakehouses.

Bakehouses are inspected periodically. An extensive examination of all Bakehouses and Stores has recently been carried out and with the co-operation of all owners considerable improvements have been effected or are still being carried out. Generally speaking the whole of the Bakehouses in the Borough will eventually be in good order.

Factories and Workshops.

Factories and Workshops are inspected periodically and are found generally to be kept as required by the Factory Act. Owners have however from time to time been asked to make minor alterations and which have been carried out.

Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are enforced by the Borough:—

Number on Register	...	...	...	...	14
Number of Inspections	...	...	...	...	18
Notices served	...	...	...	...	nil

Meat and Foods condemned as unfit for human consumption.

Cooked Meats: 3cwts., 0qrs., 20lbs., 0ozs.

Cooked Chicken: 0cwts., 0qrs., 3lbs., 12ozs.

Tinned Meats (various weights) ... 80 Tins

Tinned Fish ... 1 Tin

Boiled Crab ... 14 lbs.

Tinned Fruits ... 168 Tins

Tinned Vegetables ... 28 Tins

Tinned Milk ... 21 Tins

Inspection of Food Premises.

The Council have adopted the Food Handling Byelaws and during the year 42 visits were made to Food Premises in the Borough.

Generally the standard of cleanliness was good. A number of informal letters have been sent to owners and occupiers and those premises are now being brought up to the standard required by the Food and Drugs Act, 1938 and the Food Handling Byelaws.

Section 14 (Premises).

Visits have been made to all premises which require registration under the Act. Two premises have been registered and the remainder are now being brought up to the required standard which when completed will receive registration.

Ice Cream.

Visits have been made to premises where Ice Cream is sold and they have been found to be satisfactory. One new premises has been registered. Only one firm in the Borough produces its own Ice Cream and two samples were taken during the summer months and both of these were placed in grade one, this being very satisfactory.

Slaughterhouses.

No Slaughterhouses are in use in the Borough.

Meat Inspection.

Meat supplies are now examined at Barnstaple by the Barnstaple Corporation's staff before delivery to South Molton. Should however, any butcher consider that any meat in his hands is unfit for consumption he notifies the Borough Sanitary Inspector who examines the meat and if found to be unfit it is condemned and in most cases it is returned to Barnstaple.

Rats and Mice (Destruction) Act 1919 and Orders.

The following methods for the destruction of Rats and Mice are taken: The Refuse Tip at Hacche Road, the Sewage Outfalls at Mole Bridge and West End Terrace are periodically treated by pre-baiting and then with poisoned baits and the results are satisfactory. A number of private houses and business premises have been visited on receipt of complaints, and disinfestation has been carried out.

Factories in which Section 7 is enforced by the Borough:—

Number on Register	...	...	...	...	24
Number of Inspections	...	...	...	...	10
Notices served	...	...	...	...	nil
Cases in which defects were found:—					
Want of cleanliness—Found	...	...	...	...	2
Want of cleanliness—Remedied	...	...	...	...	2

I have to acknowledge with thanks the help Mr. Nex has given me in connection with investigation of sanitary complaints, and in particular with regard to the inspections and reports on Food Premises under the Food and Drugs Act and the Food Handling Byelaws. He has in addition rendered valuable assistance with regard to sampling and chlorination of water supplies.

I am, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

HAROLD SETTLE,

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

